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Sixty-first year

Letter dated 24 February 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In addition to my letter (A/60/686-S/2006/118) I have the honour to submit to you the text of an appeal of displaced persons from Khojaly to the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe (see annex).

The residents of Khojaly, who suffered one of the most terrible tragedies of the twentieth century, condemn genocide and acts of terrorism in all their forms, urge humankind to mobilize its efforts for the resolution of all conflicts on the Earth and to struggle for a free and prosperous community of people living in peace and order.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 40, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 24 February 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Appeal of displaced persons from Khojaly to the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe

We, the witnesses of the Khojaly genocide committed in February 1992 in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, who miraculously survived the tragedy, once again appeal with high hope to the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe as well as to all the civilized world community, and call for the rendering of the due legal and political assessment to the Khojaly genocide.

In order to realize their plan of creating "Great Armenia", Armenians, who erected a monument in 1978 on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of their movement to Azerbaijan from Iran, pursued a consistent policy of aggression against Azerbaijan in the last two centuries with the assistance of their foreign accomplices, and committed crimes against humanity such as genocide, terrorism, homicide and deportation.

Numerous historical documents prove that millions of Azerbaijanis suffering ethnic cleansing and genocide in the periods 1905-1907, 1918-1920 and 1948-1953 in their historical ethnic territories were murdered en masse or obliged to flee from their native lands.

Finally, Armenian separatism and groundless territorial claims against Azerbaijan were raised again in 1988 and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict began. During 1988-1989, 250,000 Azerbaijanis, to the last man, were deported from their historical ethnic territories in Armenia, with hundreds of civilians brutally killed in the process. Consequently, Armenia became a mono-ethnic country, which was a long-cherished dream of Armenians.

Unfortunately, the former Soviet leadership and the civilized world remained indifferent to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that started in 1988, the barbarity of Armenians and the torment of Azerbaijanis. Encouraged by this indifference, Armenians succeeded in pursuing their policy of genocide against Azerbaijanis and committing historical crimes one after another. Twenty per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan, including seven regions around Nagorno-Karabakh, was occupied by Armenian armed forces, more than 1 million Azerbaijanis were expelled from native lands, tens of thousands of people were killed, disabled or taken hostage. Hundreds of settlements, thousands of houses, educational and health institutions, historical-cultural monuments, mosques, temples and cemeteries were destroyed, once again proving Armenian vandalism.

Mass slaughter committed by Armenian barbarians against the Azerbaijani population of Karabakh in the villages of Kerkijahan, Mesheli, Koushchular, Karadaghly and Aghdaban, terrorist acts in Baku and other cities, and finally the Khojaly genocide are all the historical stigma of "suffering and miserable" Armenians.

We bring with regret to the attention of the world community that the Khojaly genocide was another link in the chain of great human calamities of the twentieth century such as Khatyn, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Songmi.

On 26 February 1992, Armenian armed forces, with the direct participation of the 366th Motorized Infantry Regiment of the former Soviet Union located in Khankendi (Stepanakert), attacked the town of Khojaly (where 7,000 Azerbaijanis lived at the time) from five directions. Armenians had been keeping Khojaly under complete siege for the previous four months. On the day of the attack, 3,000 people remained in the town. The population was in need of food and medicines. There were a number of sick, wounded, aged men, women and children in the town.

Armenians, with the assistance of their foreign accomplices, razed to the ground and burned the town by means of the heavy military equipment of the 366th Regiment. Innocent civilians were murdered, with children, women, elderly and the sick being subject to awful torture and mutilation. Thus, Armenians committed a very grave historical crime — the Khojaly genocide against the Azerbaijanis — at the end of the twentieth century before the eyes of civilized humankind. The aim of this action was the homicide of Khojaly residents. It is only by accident that the majority of the residents remained alive as witnesses of the tragedy.

As a result of that genocide, 613 peaceful residents were murdered and 1,275 taken hostage. Of those, the fate of 150 people is still unknown. More than 1,000 people were disabled by bullet wounds; 83 children, 106 women and 70 elderly were among the killed; and 78 of all the mutilated people were minor boys and girls.

As a result of this military-political crime, 6 families were murdered to the last man, 25 children lost both parents and 130 children lost one parent; 56 men were burned with special cruelty, tortured, beheaded and blinded, and pregnant women bayoneted.

For 14 years, we, the residents of Khojaly, have been living in exile. We appeal to all peaceful peoples and international organizations of the world with heartache mixed with high hope. We do not believe that such authoritative organizations as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe as well as powerful nations are incapable of bringing Armenia — a State which defies international law and human values — to justice and to respect civilized relations between States.

The non-fulfilment of four resolutions of the Security Council calling for the unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan damages the image of this Organization.

We are convinced that the world community, condemning the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, will assist in the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the return of more than 1 million refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes, and the solution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh in a peaceful manner and in consonance with historical and political justice.

We, having suffered one of the most terrible tragedies of the twentieth century, condemning genocide and acts of terrorism in all its forms, call upon the peoples of the world to struggle together for peace and tranquillity. We, sounding the alarm to all international organizations, peaceful and authoritative nations, call upon

humankind to mobilize and to solve all conflicts on the Earth and to struggle for a free and prosperous community of people living in peace and order!

The appeal was adopted at the general gathering
of displaced persons from Khojaly,
held in Baku on 10 February 2006.